

Message Text

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ACTION DHA-02

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 IO-13 AID-05 PC-05 /092 W
-----101948Z 110531 /43

P 101613Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0462
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 1878

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, SHUM, BR
SUBJECT: BRAZILIAN PRESS AND OFFICIAL REACTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE
(MARCH 9)

REF: BRASILIA 1856

1. SUMMARY: PRESS TREATMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT DISPUTE REMAINED HEAVEY MARCH 9, THOUGH CONSIDERABLY REDUCED OVER PREVIOUS TWO DAYS, WITH PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SPOKESMAN CAMARGO AFFIRMING THAT BRAZIL HAS NOTHING TO FEAR FROM DOCUMENT'S PUBLICATION AND CAN EASILY JUSTIFY ITSELF. HE AND FONMIN SPOKESMAN BRANDAO NONETHELESS CONTINUED TO REFER TO MATTER AS CLOSED. PRESS, HOWEVER, REPORTED INEVITABILITY OF REPORT'S PUBLICATION, AND QUOTED VISITING SENATOR MATHIAS TO SAME EFFECT. O ESTADO DESCRIBED GOB OFFICIALS AS ATTENTIVE TO SIGNS OF A GROWING REACTION IN KEY U.S. CIRCLES AGAINST JIMMY CARTER'S HARDLINE POLICY TOWARDS BRAZIL, AND CLAIMED THAT GOB STRATEGY IS TO AVOID DRASTIC ESCALATION IN ORDER TO PURSUE A TWO-TRACK POLICY WHICH DIFFERENTIATES BETWEEN A HOSTILE USG AND THE FAVORABLY
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DISPOSED U.S. PRIVATE SECTOR, WHERE REAL ECONOMIC POWER LIES. SEVERAL PAPERS CITED EXISTENCE OF NON-POLITICAL DECISION BY ARMED FORECES A MONTH AGO NOT TO USE THE \$50 MILLION CREDITS WHICH BRAZIL IS NOW FORMALLY REJECTING BECAUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT. WIDE COVERAGE WAS ALSO GIVEN BRADY TYSON'S CRITICISM OF BRAZIL AND APOLOGY FOR ANTI-ALLENDE COUP BEFORE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION/GENEVA. POLITICAL

CLASS CONTINUED TO
OFFER STRONG SUPPORT TO GOVERNMENT, THOUGH TWO MDB DEPUTIES
ENTERED SHARPLY DISCORDANT NOTES, AND PRESS BEGAN TO COMMENT
ON SERIOUS DILEMMA PRO-HUMAN RIGHTS MDB WILL FACE IN TAKING
POSITION ON REPORT IF IT IS PUBLISHED. CHILEAN AMBASSADOR
HECTOR BRAVO, SIDED WITH BRAZIL AGAINST FOREIGN INTER-
FERENCE IN DOMESTIC AFFAIRS AND ADDED HIS SUPPORT FOR GOB
POSITION ON NUCLEAR ACCORD. END SUMMARY.

2. HUMAN RIGHYS CONTINUED TO COMMAND ATTENTION IN
BRAZILIAN PRESS, WITH HEAVY COVERAGE GIVEN DECLARATION OF
PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SPOKESMAN CAMARGO DENYING THAT BRAZIL FEARS
RELEASE OF REPORT. CAMARGO ADDED THAT GOVERNMENT "HAS MORE
THAN ENOUGH ELEMENTS AND A COMPLETE PAST TO JUSTIFY ITSELF."
ASKED ABOUT LIKELY GOB REACTION TO PUBLICATION OF REPORT BY
LOCAL PRESS, HE REPLIED, "THE PRESS IS NOT SUBJECT TO
CENSORSHIP."

3. AT SAME TIME, NEWSPAPERS REPORTED VIRTUAL INEVITABILITY
OF REPORT'S RELEASE, GIVEN U.S. LAW AND/OR DOMESTIC PRESSURES
FOR PUBLICATION, AND HIGHLIGHTED STATEMENT BY SENATOR MATHIAS
THAT REPORT ON BRAZIL, AS ONE OF THE EIGHTY WORLDWIDE, WOULD
GO FORWARD TO CONGRESS AND PROBABLY BE ENTERED IN CONGRESSIONAL
RECORD. IN SAME INTERVIEW, CARRIED IN ALL MAJOR PAPERS,
MATHIAS SAID BRAZILIAN REFUSAL OF MILITARY AID WAS SMALL ITEM
IN A LARGE AND DIVERSIFIED BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WHICH HE EXPECTED
WOULD CONTINUE UNAFFECTED. DECLARING THE REPORT A WORKING
DOCUMENT REQUIRED BY THE CONGRESS, HE ADDED, "WE DON'T WANT
TO INTERFERE, BUT WE BELIEVED WE HAVE THE RIGHT NOT TO CONTINUE
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A RELATIONSHIP (OF ASSISTANCE) WHICH WORKS AGAINST OUR PRINCIPLES."

4. BOTH CAMARGO AND FONMNIIN SPOKESMAN BRANDAO ONCE MORE DECLARED
EPISODE CLOSED. HOWEVER, IT WAS AGAIN REPORTED THAT ITAMARATY
WAS PREPARING POSSIBLE RESPONSE TO RELEASE OF DOCUMENT, THOUGH
SUCH A RESPONSE WOULD SEEK TO AVOID DEEPENING THE DISPUTE IN
PART BECAUSE TEXT OF DOCUMENT WAS NOT OF A NATURE TO PROVOKE
SERIOUS DOMESTIC REPERCUSSIONS. INDEED, JORNAL DO BRASIL REPORTED
DECLARATION BY FINANCE MINISTER SIMONSEN TO EFFECT THAT
BRAZIL REJECTED REPORT AS A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE AND THAT
CONTENTS PER SE WERE "GOOD FOR BRAZIL."

5. O ESTADO'S BRASILIA CORRESPONDENT CARLOS CONDE DESCRIBED
GOB AS ATTENTIVE TO CERTAIN SIGNS THAT COUNTER-PRESSURES
AGAINST HARDLINE CARTER POLICY TOWARDS BRAZIL ARE BUILDING
I KEY US CIRCLES; EVIDENCE IS SAID TO INCLUDE THIS
WEEK'S WASHINGTON POST EDITORIAL; PREFERENCE OF US BANKERS
FOR MAINTENANCE OF FAVORABLE INVESTMENT CLIMATE ABROAD; AND
SEN. HUMPHREY'S "IRONICAL" COMMENT TO DEPUTY SECRETARY

CHRISTOPHER UPON THE LETTER'S SENATE APPEARANCE MARCH 7 ("I HOPE YOU HAVE A WARMER RECEPTION HERE THAN DURING YOUR VISIT TO BRAZIL.").

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6. IN SAME EDITION, CORRESPONDENT CLOVIS ROSSI DECLARES GOB STRATEGY WILL BE TO DIFFERENTIATE RELATIONS WITH CARTER ADMINISTRATION (BAD AND NOT LIKELY TO IMPROVE) FROM THOSE WITH US BUSINESS COMMUNITY. ACCORDING TO ROSSI, GOVERNMENT BEFORE LATEST EPISODE HAD ALREADY INITIATED STUDIES OF BILATERAL ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP IN PREPARATION FOR POSSIBLE US ECONOMIC PRESSURES OVER NUCLEAR ACCORD. CONCLUSION REACHED WAS THAT BRAZIL DEPENDS VERY LITTLE ON USG, AS DISTINGUISHED FROM PRIVATE SECTOR: USG RETALIATION THROUGH IDB AND WORLD BANK IS DEEMED UNLIKELY, BECAUSE CONTRARY TO ORGANIZATIONAL STATUTES AND ATTITUDES OF NON-US DIRECTORS; OTHER MAIN WEAPON WOULD BE RIGOROUS APPLICATION OF ESCAPE CLAUSES OF TRADE ACT, WHICH WOULD HAVE BUT MARGINAL ECONOMIC IMPACT ON BRAZIL. AS FOR PRIVATE SECTOR, US BUSINESSMEN AND BANKERS ARE, IF ANYTHING, LIKELY TO PRESSURE CARTER FOR A SOFTENING OF POLICY TOWARDS BRAZIL, DUE TO LATTER'S ATTRACTIVENESS TO FOREIGN INVESTORS. THUS, BRAZIL SHOULD HAVE NO NEED (AND HAS NO DESIRE) FOR DIPLOMATIC OR ECONOMIC REALIGNMENT; GOB WILL SEE PUBLICATION OF REPORT AS UNFRIENDLY ACT, BUT CURRENT PREOCCUPATION IS TO PUT AN END TO MATTER AND AVOID GROWTH OF

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ANTI-US PRESSURES (ESPECIALLY WITHIN MILITARY), WHICH COULD FORCE RETALIATORY MEASURES AND SPOIL STRATEGY BY FRIGHTENING OFF THE US PRIVATE SECTOR. ROSSI FINDS IT IRONIC THAT, ACCORDING TO HIM, THOSE ON BOTH SIDES WHO HAVE READ REPORT CONSIDER IT "FAIRLY MILD," REAL BRAZILIAN OBJECTION BEING TO INTERFERENCE PER SE. HOWEVER, OFFICIAL CIRCLES ARE ALSO SAID TO BE OF UNANIMOUS OPINION THAT CARTER IS USING HUMAN RIGHTS TO BLACKMAIL BRAZIL INTO A RETREAT ON NUCLEAR ACCORD, WHICH IS NOW DEEMED BY ALL TO BE AN "ALL OR NOTHING" AFFAIR.

7. O ESTADO, FOLHA, AND O GLOBO, CITING "HIGH MILITARY SOURCES," REPORTED THAT ARMED FORCES HAD DECIDED ON NON-POLITICAL GROUNDS A MONTH AGO NOT TO USE THE "50 MILLION IN CREDITS, JUST AS ONLY \$10 MILLION OF \$60 MILLION CREDITS FOR FY-76 WERE UTILIZED. IT WAS ALSO REPORTED THAT GEISEL RECEIVED REPORT EVENING OF MARCH 5 ON EFFECTS OF ANY US ARMS EMBARGO.

8. PRESS GAVE FULL ATTENTION TO DECLARATION BY BRADY TYSON BEFORE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION/GENEVA, LAMENTING US OVERTHROW OF ALLENDE AND CRITICIZING HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BRAZIL, AMONG OTHER COUNTRIES.

9. POLITICAL FIGURES OF BOTH PARTIES CONTINUED TO PROCLAIM SUPPORT FOR GOVERNMENT IN THIS EPISODE, THOUGH THERE WERE SIGNIFICANT NOTES OF DISCORD. CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION WAS GIVEN STATEMENT BY MDB DEPUTY TANCREDO NEVES, WHO OFFERED HIS "UNCONDITIONAL SUPPORT" TO GEISEL, BUT ADDED "FROM THIS INCIDENT WE SHOULD TAKE A LESSON: AI-5 IS A SAD BACKDROP FOR EXTERNAL REPERCUSSIONS, BY GIVING ECHO AND RESONANCE TO OCCURRENCES HARMFUL TO OUR DIGNITY," AND BY "COMPROMISING OUR IMAGE BEFORE CIVILIZED PEOPLES." MDB DEPUTY LAURO RODRIGUES (RIO GRANDE DO SUL) DECLARED THAT WHILE HIS CONSCIENCE REQUIRED HIM TO REPULSE THE US "PRETENSION," IT ALSO OBLIGED HIM TO ASK WHETHER OR NOT PAST CHARGES IN THE BRAZILIAN PRESS AND CONGRESS CONCERNING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES ARE TRUE. RODRIGUES WENT ON TO DISTINGUISH THE CONCEPTS OF MAN AND

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CITIZEN, AFFIRMING THAT THE FORMER IS UNIVERSAL AND THAT CARTER, IN TAKING UP A COMMITMENT TO MAN, ACTED PROPERLY "IN THE NAME OF LIBERTY, RIGHTS, AND HONOR." US INITIATIVES HE CONCLUDED, ARE NOT DIRECTED AT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF PEOPLES, BUT AT THE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT THAT RULE THEM.

10. PRESS COMMENT IS BEGINNING TO FOCUS ON MDB UNEASE WITH THE ISSUE, APPARENT IN STATEMENTS BY SEVERAL (BUT STILL

ONLY A FEW) LEGISLATORS AND IN THE GENERAL DISCOMFORT CAUSED BY SECRETARY GENERAL THALES RAMALHO'S PROPOSAL FOR AN IN-PERSON PARTY AFFIRMATION OF SOLIDARITY WITH GEISEL. O ESTADO COLUMNIST CARLOS CHAGAS POINTED TODAY TO PROFOUND INTERNAL CRISIS WHICH MAY FACE MDB IF US REPORT IS RELEASED: ON ONE HAND, PARTY CANNOT FAIL TO COMMENT ON ACCUSATIONS (ESPECIALLY IF PROVEN), GIVEN ITS FIRM COMMITMENT TO HUMAN RIGHTS; ON OTHER HAND, IN PRESENT CLIMATE THE MDB RISKS DEEP IRE ON THE PART OF THE GOVERNMENT AND A POSSIBLE LABEL OF "TREASON" IF IT SPEAKS OUT, IN EFFECT ENDORSING REPORT. MDB OFFICIALS MAY THUS CONFRONT CHOICE BETWEEN LOSS OF POPULAR BACKING AND LOSS OF THEIR HEADS. FOLHA ARTICLE POINTS TO THALES RAMALHO EPISODE AS SYMPTOMATIC OF THE MDB'S BLATANT FAILURE TO EVER ARRIVE AT AN OFFICIAL POSITION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THE MATTER HAVING BEEN LEFT TO THE CONGRESSIONAL FACTION BECAUSE OF THE PARTY LEADERSHIP'S FEAR OF GOVERNMENT REACTION. MDB IS THUS PLACED IN POSITION OF EMBARRASSMENT OVER QUESTION OF HOW TO DEAL WITH CURRENT EPISODE.

11. EDITORIAL REACTION HAS FALLEN OFF SOMEWHAT. JORNAL DO BRASIL WARNS THAT DISSENSION WITHIN WESTERN ALLIANCES HAS INVARIABLY BEEN EXPLOITED BY MOSCOW IN ITS PURSUIT OF WORLD DOMINATION; US/BRAZIL RELATIONSHIP THEREFORE HAS GLOBAL ASPECT AND IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT NEITHER PARTY LOSE SIGHT OF FACT THAT DETERIORATION OF RELATIONS WOULD BE OF GREAT BENEFIT TO USSR. CORREIO BRASILIENSE LAUDS GOB, PARTICULARLY ITAMARATY, FOR ADEPT HANDLING OF EPISODE; POINTS OUT BRAZIL'S INDEPENDENCE OF US BASED ON DIVERSIFICATION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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RELATIONSHIPS, EXTENDING EVEN TO COMMUNIST TRADING PARTNERS IN A DEMONSTRATION OF BRAZILIAN PRAGMATISM AND GROWING MATURITY; AND ENDS WITH BATHETIC PAEAN TO THE CAUSE OF NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY. CORREIO COLUMNIST EDSON LOBAO DUBS CARTER AN "AMATEUR" WHO HAS PRODUCED AN EFFECT OPPOSITE TO THAT INTENDED, BY UNITING ADVESARIES WITHIN AND AMONG LATIN AMERICAN STATES IN OPPOSITION TO FOREIGN INTERFERENCE.

12. CHILEAN AMBASSADOR HECTOR BRAVO SPOKE UP MARCH 8 IN SUPPORT OF BRAZIL. "WE ALREADY HAD THE SAME TREATMENT GIVEN BRAZIL BY THE UNITED STATES," HE DECLARED, ADDING THAT IT ONLY SERVED TO INCREASE DOMESTIC SUPPORT FOR THE CHILEAN GOVERNMENT. "NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY SHOULD NOT TOUCHED AND THE JUDGMENT ONE MAY MAKE CONCERNING A SUPPOSED VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN SHOULD NOT COMPROMISE THE SOVEREIGN RIGHTS OF EACH COUNTRY TO MANAGE ITS INTERNAL AFFAIRS." EMPHASIZING THAT IT WAS A MATTER WHICH WAS NONE OF HIS CONCERN, HE NONETHELESS ADDED HIS SUPPORT FOR BRAZIL'S POSITION AS REGARDS THE NUCLEAR ACCORD. CRIMMINS

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Message Attributes

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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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Enclosure: n/a
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